

The Flu: Information for Daycares & Preschools on Flu Vaccines

What is influenza or "the flu"?

The flu is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs. It is spread easily by coughing, sneezing, and talking. Most people are sick for about a week, and then feel better. Some people (especially the elderly and young children) can get very sick from the flu. Some children and adults die each year.

What are the symptoms of the flu?

People with the flu develop a high fever, headache, dry cough, sore throat and achy muscles very quickly. Children may have stomach problems. Some people with the flu have NO symptoms at all and can still spread flu to others.

How can children be protected from the flu?

Getting flu vaccine is the best way to protect children and adults from the flu. Flu vaccine is now recommended for:

- children aged 6 months through 18 years
- those in close contact with children birth through 18 years of age

What can I do to protect my daycare/preschool children?

Get vaccinated and encourage others in contact with children to be vaccinated - parents, siblings, teachers and other day care staff. Getting vaccinated is especially important for those taking care of infants younger than 6 months of age. These babies are too young to be given vaccine.

Is flu vaccine recommended for children in daycare or preschool?

Yes. CDC and MDCH recommend that children 6 months of age and older receive flu vaccine to help them stay healthy, although the vaccine is not required for school or daycare entry.



Do children (and adults) have to get a shot?

No. There are currently 2 types of vaccine - a shot and nasal-spray. Some children may need 2 doses of vaccine. Health care providers can determine which type of vaccine can be given and how many doses are needed.

How often should children be vaccinated with flu vaccine?

To be protected, children and adults need to be given flu vaccine every year - usually in the fall or winter months.

Are flu vaccines safe?

Yes, the flu vaccines are safe and can be given with other vaccines. It is important to understand that the chance of being harmed from this disease is much greater than any chance of being harmed from vaccination.

Are there side effects from the flu vaccine?

Most adults and children have little or no problems after receiving flu vaccine. There may be soreness or redness where the shot was given. The nasal flu vaccine can sometimes cause a stuffy nose.

What if a child's family cannot afford vaccine?

Children 18 years of age and younger may be eligible to receive publicly purchased vaccines through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. To learn more about the VFC program contact your local health department or health care provider.

For more information about flu and flu vaccine, contact your health care provider or local health department.

Additional information is available:

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention • cdc.gov/flu
Michigan Dept of Community Health • michigan.gov/flu
Pandemic Flu Toolkit • mdch.train.org/panflu/education

